

(Draft)
CONCEPT NOTE
PREPARATION OF THE 3rd VNR 2024

I. Voluntary National Review (VNR)

The Voluntary National Review (VNR) is a process through which countries assess and present national progress made in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda encourage member States to “conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven”.

VNRs serve as a basis for the regular global reviews by the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) held annually in July in New York. It aims to facilitate the sharing of experience, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNR also seeks to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnership for SDG acceleration. VNRs are not only a reporting mechanism to periodically take stock, but also a tool to continuously reflect and improve on the SDG implementation process itself.

II. The Lao PDR - Main focus of the 3rd VNR

As we approach the mid-point of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Lao PDR will present the VNR again for the 3rd time in 2024, which is also timely as the Government is in the process of mid-term review of the 9th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2021-2025), and the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) will also conduct the 2024 triennial review of the Lao PDR’s graduation path from the Least Developed Countries.

Against this backdrop, the Lao PDR took a step forward moving from descriptive analysis (First VNR in 2018) to more trend analysis (Second VNR in 2021). As per guidance by the National SDG Steering Committee during its annual meeting this year, **the 3rd VNR in 2024 will be both *Trend and Track Analysis***, that will include the information on progress and the status of all 17 SDG + 1 National SDG and more in-depth analysis of a number of selected Goals and Targets seen as national priority.

This in-depth analysis may be guided by the country in light of its priorities but also provided the Lao PDR’s best practice examples in implementation or innovative policies to share at the global level. Specifically, the consideration of Goals will focus on trends and tracks, as well as successes, critical challenges, interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs, emerging issues, and lessons learned, and describe what actions and intervention have been taken to address existing gaps and the challenges that have been identified .

The review of goals will include both qualitative and / or a quantitative dimension when available. As Lao PDR is preparing its third and subsequent voluntary national reviews, it will also include the progress made since the previous review (2nd VNR), along with any specific efforts and intervention that have been undertaken to address recommendations from the previous review.

At this stage, VNR3 will cover the goals and targets in a range of different ways, including providing:

- a snapshot and info-graphic of the status of the goals and targets;
- achievements and good practices;
- the impact of country interventions at home and abroad;
- gaps and challenges;
- challenges and opportunities;
- interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs with other goals;
- an analysis of emerging issues; and
- plans for future enhanced implementation.

III. Key steps for the 3rd VNR

The Lao PDR gains valuable insight and experiences through its first and second VNRs submission in 2018 and 2021, respectively. There are numbers of key steps and components essential for the successful VNR preparation, including developing [Work plan / Roadmap](#) with key deliverables aligned with the HLPF deadline and appropriate [Time Allocation](#) to organize relevant [Stakeholder Engagement and Consultations](#), in parallel with [Outlining and Information gathering from both new and existing reports and data](#). In addition, as per previous VNR submission, the Lao PDR has well established [Coordination structure](#) and the National SDG mechanisms (namely the SDG Secretariat, focal points and NSC) who will lead and guide the VNR process, including working closely with all development partners and UN agencies in identifying and mobilizing [resources, technical support and possible funding](#) of carry out and writing the reviews (namely the the organization of stakeholder consultations, participation in the international and regional meeting, production of the review, among others).

IV. Scope of the 3rd VNR.

The VNR3 will reflect the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and indicate steps that the country intends to take to accelerate the implementation as part of the decade of action, its re-commitment and delivery launched at the SDG Summit in September 2023.

As VNRs are national reviews and with the aim to report on the progress in relation to all **17 SDGs + 1 National SDG**, where priority goals have been identified nationally, countries could cover those in greater depth. The report will consider where the country is in the national planning cycle and whether the national strategy or plan, budgets, policies has been updated or aligned with the SDGs and how this has helped national implementation including examining policy coherence and interlinkages. The VNR3 will also identify the main challenges and difficulties experienced in implementing the SDGs as a whole and how they foresee overcoming these barriers, including the recovery from the COVID-19 and the current multiple crisis and identify areas where assistance is needed. The candid inclusion of successes and lessons learned in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will be highlighted to show case the national ownership and efforts.

V. Proposed Work Plan and timeframe

Activity	Responsible	Timing 2023																			
		June				Jul-Aug-Sep				October				November				December			
		W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4
1. SDG National Steering Committee on SDG	SDG Secretariat	X	X																		
2. Establishment of Third SDG VNR government core team	SDG Secretariat			X	X	X	X	X	X	X											
3. National SDG Secretariat Meeting to discuss step forward VNR3 (Vientiane)	SDG Secretariat										X	X									
4. Global Prep I	SDG Secretariat										X	X	X	X							
5. Organization of meeting of National SDGs Focal Points from line ministries and equivalent to brief about a process and objectives of an update of the SDG indicators (Luang Prabang)	SDG Secretariat/ FAO**														X	X					
6. Organization of Provincial Stakeholder Engagement Workshop in contributing to the Lao PDR's 3rd SDG VNR Preparation, under the topic: 'SDG 4 Quality Education: addressing School Dropout and Policy Recommendation (Luang Prabang)	SDG Secretariat/ UNICEF														X	X					
7. SDG VNR outline with initial data set shared with key partners for comments and feedbacks	SDG Secretariat/RC /FAO/UNICEF															X	X				
8. Approval of the SDG VNR outline and its work plan	Government															X	X				
9. Organization of the inception multi-stakeholder workshop to present the process and the objective of the third	SDG Secretariat/ FAO																	X	X		

Activity	Responsible	Timing 2023																			
		June				Jul-Aug-Sep				October				November				December			
		W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4
SDG VNR as per the guidance from the National SDG Steering Committee																					
10. Organize the SDG-VNR stakeholder engagement (Luang Namtha)	SDG Secretariat																			X	X
11. Periodic refreshing training for SDG Secretariat and key technical taskforce team members to validate and ensure accuracy of data and information on national progress toward SDG indicators	SDG Secretariat/ FAO**																			X	X

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Activity	Responsible	Timing 2024 (1)															
		January				February				March				April			
		W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4
12. Carrying series of technical workshops with SDG reporting owners to track progress of each SDG indicators	SDG Secretariat/FAO	x	x	x	x	x	x										
13. Availability of SDG VNR Zero draft to be shared with relevant stakeholders for comments and review	SDG Secretariat				x	x	x	x									
14. Carrying out series of SDG workshop in three regions to ensure provincial elements and context are properly analysed as inputs for the 3VNR and a plan for creating of SDG provincial focal points (North)	SDG Secretariat /FAO							x	x	x							
15. Carrying out series of SDG workshop in three regions to ensure provincial elements and context are properly analysed as inputs for the 3VNR and a plan for creating of SDG provincial focal points (Central)	SDG Secretariat/FAO									x	x						
16. Carrying out series of SDG workshop in three regions to ensure provincial elements and context are properly analysed as inputs for the 3VNR and a plan for creating of SDG provincial focal points (South)	SDG Secretariat/FAO										x	x					
17. Global Prep II	SDG Secretariat									x	x	x	x				
18. 3 days – technical write shop and development of communication material for the SDG VNR3 (Gov Focal Point + Consultants and Key partners)	SDG Secretariat												x	X			

Activity	Responsible	Timing 2024 (1)															
		January				February				March				April			
		W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4
19. Availability and revision of the SDG VNR draft based on comments/suggestions received	SDG Secretariat												x	x			
20. Organization of a consultation with private sector, civil society and academia and youth	SDG Secretariat/FAO													x	x		
21. Availability of SDG VNR first draft	SDG Secretariat															x	x

Activity	Responsible	Timing 2024 (2)															
		May				June				July				August-Onward			
		W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4
22. Submission of Main Message	SDG Secretariat	x	x														
23. Organization of a final consultation meeting with the relevant stakeholder representative to verify the draft / get final feedbacks from the stakeholders on policy papers	SDG Secretariat/FAO	x	x														
24. Revision of SDG VNR draft based on comments received	SDG Secretariat			x	x												
25. Availability of SDG VNR second draft	SDG Secretariat			x	x	x											
26. Organization of the Annual National SDGs Steering Committee Triennial Review to discuss and consult on the latest draft of VNR3	NSC						x	x									
27. Availability of SDG VNR final draft	SDG Secretariat								x	x							
28. Final review, editing, proofread etc.	SDG Secretariat								x	x							

Activity	Responsible	Timing 2024 (2)															
		May				June				July				August-Onward			
		W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4
29. Submission of Final Report								X	X								
30. Global Prep III									X	X							
31. Attending the HLPLF and presenting Lao SDG VNR										X	X						
32. Publication and dissemination												X	X				
33. Organization of annual seminar/retreat of the National SDG Secretariat and Focal Point to update the SDG indicators and action following the submission of the 3 rd VNR														X	X	X	X

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